

DIXIE TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DTEC)
MINUTES
February 18, 2015

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Jon Pike, St. George Mayor
Darren LeFevre, Toquerville Mayor
Wayne Peterson, Leeds Mayor
Chris Hart, Ivins Mayor
John Bramall, Hurricane Mayor
Ken Sizemore, Santa Clara City Council

OTHERS PRESENT

Kyler Brower, Senator Mike Lee's Office
Stan Smith, Springdale Mayor
Bruce Densley, Virgin Mayor
Kyle Gubler, LaVerkin City Administrator
Gary Webster, Cong. Chris Stewart's Office
Dana Meier, UDOT
Cameron Cutler, St. George City
Myron Lee, Dixie MPO
Levi Roberts, Dixie MPO
Dave Demas, Dixie MPO
Curt Hutchings, Five County
Dave Glenn, Ivins City
Mike Shaw, Washington City
Kai Reed, Southern Utah Bicycle Alliance

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Chris Hart welcomed all in attendance and introductions were made. It was established that a quorum exists for voting on action items.

BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2015

MOTION: **Motion by Ken Sizemore to Approve the Minutes from the January 21, 2015, DTEC meeting. Motion seconded by Mayor Bramall and carried by unanimous vote.**

B. JPAC representation (Appointment)

Mayor Hart stated that the Chair of DTEC also sits on the Board of the Joint Policy Advisory Council (JPAC) and this causes a problem since the JPAC meeting dates

conflict with City Council meetings for Mayor Hart so it is not practical for him to attend.

Myron Lee clarified that JPAC is comprised of each of the four (4) MPO's and convenes the first Thursday each month in Salt Lake City starting at 11:30 and usually lasts until 1:30. The Dixie MPO has two (2) votes one of which must be an elected official and Commissioner Eardley fulfilled that role up until his retirement in December.

Mayor Pike and Mayor Bramall made a motion to elect Commissioner Renstrom to sit on the JPAC Board as the elected official. Mr. Lee made mention that Commissioner Renstrom asked to be excused from attending this meeting today because of a Chamber Meeting and Mayor Hart explained that he hesitated nominating Commissioner Renstrom when he wasn't present to say whether or not his schedule would permit.

Before it was voted on, Mayor Hart stated that because he would love to attend the JPAC meetings he asked Myron Lee to inquire at the March 5th JPAC meeting to see if the meeting dates can be changed to Wednesdays rather than Thursdays, mentioning that at this time we do not have an elected official that is able to attend, it's important for us to be represented and due to traveling the furthest distance, accommodating the request would be appreciated.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A. Dixie Transportation Expo Preliminary Report

Mayor Hart expressed that the Dixie Transportation Expo was terrific with a surprising number of people that attended.

Myron Lee presented a graph on the Transportation Expo attendance over time with the lowest attendance being in 2006 with only 354 people. Transportation Expos have been attempted in other places in Utah with not more than a 100 people at the event so the attendance this year speaks a lot to the importance that is placed on transportation in Southern Utah with 668 people attending. The cities along with the County, MPO and UDOT are very supportive of having this Expo annually and are seeing an increase in attendance over time from last year at 553 attendees to the year before with only 454. Extremely valuable data was captured with a survey that was passed out as people came in which was designed to take a minimal amount of time or upwards of 40 minutes for those that wanted to put a lot of thought into it. This data is being entered into a spread sheet and a full report will be given at the next DTEC Meeting in March.

Ken Sizemore was pleasantly surprised to see that the hours were extended to 6:00 PM and was curious to know the attendance between 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

Mr. Lee stated that 15 people attended between 5 and 6 and the extended hours were advertised last minute in *The Spectrum*. Most of the attendance happened before 2 PM.

Mayor Pike commended Mr. Sizemore on the idea of extending the hours because then everyone wishing to attend has the option to do so. Mayor Pike also mentioned UDOT's video presentation showing an analysis that actually models the traffic was very interesting.

Mayor Hart thought the displays were exceptional and appreciated the Southern Utah Bicycling Alliance being there and having bikes for the public to look at.

Dana Meier expressed how great and well attended the Expo was with a lot of good discussion. In the past a large attendance has been attributed to a controversial project but that was not the draw this year.

Mr. Meier talked about how ADOT has a long line of projects affecting the Gorge and believes this Expo would be very valuable for them.

It was recommended and determined that Mr. Meier would extend an invitation so that they have the opportunity to attend next year.

Myron Lee's graph is attached.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

A. Long Range Plan schedule and Maps

Curt Hutchings distributed maps and spoke concerning the schedule for the long range plan from now until the year 2040. The draft will be available in March. A 30 day public comment period will take place in April and May is set aside to respond to the comments previously received. In June the final draft will be packaged and sent to DTAC for recommendation and then to DTEC for approval by the end of June.

The maps consisted of projects that are being considered along with the different phases of the plan. The maps included a boundary map, population map including the projected 2040 population, an employment change map which showed where jobs are available today and the expected availability of jobs in the year 2040. A map also reported on serious and fatal crashes, which is important to be aware of due to funds that are available for transportation projects from the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

Dana Meier clarified that HSIP provides federal dollars that can be used on any route to help resolve serious or fatal crashes if it can be shown how to mitigate that kind of a crash. The Zero Fatalities Website shows all of the routes in the state including the local, municipal and county routes and carries the accident history with the severity. Because funding is available it would be beneficial to review on occasion to determine if there are routes in certain jurisdictions that may have serious or fatal accidents that can be addressed.

Mr. Hutchings continued discussing the maps showing a no-build and build map comparing the congestion between the two, emphasizing the green bar is good and the black bar is considered impossible with the road reaching its capacity. A Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities map was included along with planning options and a transit service map showing the possibility of routes going to Washington City as well as to the airport and Zion National Park, which is currently in the study phase. The final two maps identified the different types of roads based on its type of use and a freight network map that shows the roads in the area that are in the primary freight network for the State. This is important because the transportation bill currently lends an additional \$1.5% of federal funds that can only be used through freight projects.

Curt Hutchings's maps are attached.

B. Bike/Pedestrian Plan Update

Levi Roberts explained that the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan includes infrastructure recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as policies and programs. Mr. Roberts believes it will be a good resource for cities throughout the region to use as a guiding document in planning. The master plan draft for our region and map was displayed at the Expo where comments were received from the public. The draft is currently being reviewed with the Steering Committee and a presentation will be made to DTAC next month. DTAC will then take it to the cities for comment and the content of the plan will be presented to DTEC for a recommendation for MPO adoption in April.

Mayor Hart mentioned there are significant things that will need to be voted on in the upcoming meetings and asked that the voting members of the DTEC Committee email Nicholle if unable to attend to insure a quorum is present month to month.

SHORT RANGE PLANNING

A. St. George to Zion Canyon Transit Study (concept)

Myron Lee stated that two weeks ago the DTAC Committee heard a request from the

Zion Canyon Corridor Council (ZC3) committee and Hurricane City to do a transit study looking at a line from Hurricane out to Zion National Park. The park service is very interested in this as well because every holiday, the park becomes overloaded with tourists and parking becomes very difficult. This is a very significant study looking at all the different elements in building a transit line. The DTAC responded favorably, however, the MPO will not fund the entire study estimated at \$80,000 because it reaches out beyond the boundaries of the MPO. It was agreed upon for the MPO to fund \$46,000 of the study, which has been currently budgeted. The group will go before the Council of Governments (COG) meeting seeking the balance of the money for the study.

Levi Roberts clarified that in 2010, a long-range bus rapid transit study was done from St. George to Hurricane with dedicated bus ways as well as a study from Hurricane to Zion National Park. The current study will be looking at the whole corridor between St. George and Zion and the shorter term of what resources are available that can be implemented and geared toward getting something started that is more feasible. Federal funding matches at 80/20 for capital expenses, meaning buses and 50/50 for operating.

Stan Smith commented that a study has to be done in order to apply for federal funding.

Mayor Hart made mention that once Sun Tran reaches Washington, Hurricane is not really out of reach and at that point Zions wouldn't be that out of reach as the next step. The cost for the study was a concern knowing that it is already knowledge that transportation would be beneficial from Hurricane to Zion and is already being planned on.

Mayor Bramall said that once it's decided that transit is needed, it takes approximately 18 months to implement so it is important to think ahead and wondered if LaVerkin would be interested in one stop a few times a day.

Kyle Gubler said that it has been talked about but the concern is the money and what the City has to contribute.

Cameron Cutler mentioned that to run the buses and replace them is costly and once the buses are above the mileage cap, the cost for maintenance is not cost effective. A budget has to be approved a year in advance in order to keep Sun Tran running effectively.

Mayor Hart said that Sun Tran has been very favorably received and every city has residents that would benefit in utilizing it and simply a matter of expanding to make the connection to benefit the outer cities. Mayor Hart asked if this study will determine

whether a regional transportation entity is needed and whether the federal park is participating financially in the study because they will be the beneficiaries.

Mr. Roberts responded that it could mention the need for regional transportation because it will cover the demand and identify funding resources. He also said that the federal park is not participating in the cost of the study because federal funds cannot be matched with federal funds.

Mayor Bramall expressed that the federal park could use the entrance fees, which are private funds. It is speculated that the entrance fee rates will potentially raise in March.

Mr. Roberts continued to explain that of the portion in the rural area 80% would be provided through the UDOT Public Transit Team and 20% would come from the COG if approved.

Mayor Bramall said that the current concern is traffic and parking. If there was an emergency in Springdale it would be difficult to manage and asked Mayor Pike if he was in favor of St. George Sun Tran going to Zion National Park.

Mayor Pike questioned how St. George would afford it and is grateful for what Ivins has done making it possible to add a few more routes to include Walmart, among other places.

Feasibility needs to be looked at along with who would pay for it and mentioned that the Federal Government along with St. George City currently subsidizes a few dollars per ride. Mayor Pike explained that it is a great and necessary service that needs to be expanded, but the question is how fast and at what cost. It is important that service is not lost by being spread too thin.

Myron Lee mentioned the Regional Transit Study indicated that in order to expand bus service you need three things: public support, funding, and the governance of the system. A transit authority would give the governance. In order to make it a regional system that people could use, the funding would have to come from some sort of sales tax. The point when sales tax starts funding the regional system is the ideal time to transfer it from St. George City to a transit authority. In the interim, the Regional Transit Plan recommended that inter-local agreements be set up between the different cities.

Mr. Roberts reminded the group that this is multi-jurisdictional including several different entities that this study will help bring together to figure out the details.

Dave Demas reiterated that in order to apply for the funds a study is required and explained that Levi and the group have worked closely with the UDOT Public Transit

Team writing the scope of this document and have reviewed it many times making several corrections and changes to it.

It was a unanimous decision that Zion National Park should contribute financially to the study.

Mayor Smith is in favor of the study too and explained that bus transit would be a huge benefit for Springdale where employees are hard to obtain because of transportation. Mayor Smith continued saying that although Springdale has a small population, production by Springdale for the State and County is large. When talking about what can be done to generate additional funds caution must be taken not to put all the burden onto the tourists which would be, "killing the goose that is laying the golden egg." Springdale was absolutely packed this weekend and one of the things that seems ridiculous is free park entrance on a holiday which congress mandated. This needs to change and seems more realistic to have free park entrance on any weekend other than a holiday. The park complains of needing more funds but by making a holiday free, they are giving away money that guests were already planning to spend.

Mayor Hart would like to see the bids and scope of work along with the report.

Ken Sizemore expressed the importance of keeping the Regional Transit discussion as a standing agenda item so that concrete steps can be taken to keep it moving and decisions made.

MOTION: Motion by Mayor Bramall to Approve the St. George to Zion Canyon Transit Study. Motion seconded by Ken Sizemore and carried by unanimous vote.

B. COG Priority List Coordination

Council of Governments (COG) is meeting March 3rd to go over the priority list for the corridor preservation fund. As part of preparing for that effort public works departments throughout the MPO have been contacted for a list of projects. One of the projects that will be included is the exit 11 project in Washington.

UDOT/FHWA BUSINESS

A. UDOT Updates

Dana Meier said that there is going to be an Integrated Transportation Workshop at the Dixie Center in April for approximately 50-100 people. It will include transportation experts, local governments, public works directors, engineers and bicycle groups to

focus on how UDOT, the local government and MPO's can build a system and work together to accommodate bikes, buses and freight. It should be UDOT's goal to increase ridership on SunTran.

B. Federal Updates

Gary Webster mentioned that Chris Stewart's Office is working with the National Park Service to get a tour through Zion National Park.

Ken Sizemore mentioned that Jimmy Tyree is leaving the BLM Field Office and any issues needing to be addressed will not happen for approximately 6-8 months.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Bramall stated that in the March 2015 *Popular Mechanics* magazine, Hurricane City was listed in the top 5 of the safest cities to live in based on an analysis that had been done on cities surviving disasters.

Dave Glenn mentioned that for the first 11 days SunTran was operating in Ivins there were 450 riders.

NEXT MEETING

Next Scheduled DTEC meeting: March 18, 2015.

Next Scheduled COG meeting: March 3, 2015.

ADJOURN

Having no other business, Chairman Hart asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn meeting by Mayor Bramall. Motion seconded by Mayor LeFevre and carried by unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.